

Christmas Again

In a few weeks after the writing of this letter, on Saturday, December 15, several thousand children and their families will be coming to the Children's Activity Center and the Children's Activity Trucks to receive a gift for Christmas. By the grace of God this will be our eleventh year of Christmas meetings beginning way back in 1996 with 100 kids.

Every kid that attends the meetings will get a gift to take home. For many, that wouldn't seem like much, but one gift can make a huge difference for a kid who has been neglected for an entire year. For the most part these kids live in single parent homes and when it takes everything just to survive, there is little left over for something we take for granted like a Christmas gift. Folks, kids that don't receive gifts feel abandoned and left out. They don't feel loved by anyone and in their minds they feel like God doesn't love them either. While we know that this is not true, try to convince a child that it's untrue on Christmas day as they are sitting alone in a dark corner with nothing.

Therefore, we have made it our business to make Christmas just a little bit better for a lot of kids. From day one it has been our business to connect as many kids as possible with gifts. In the beginning it was just a few individuals that supplied the need. In 1996 we went to the dollar store and spent \$ 300.00 of somebody's paycheck that week and loaded up the back seat of a car and delivered them door to door. Now through Churches, individuals and businesses the need is being met for thousands of kids that are bussed into our Center and reached through the Children's Activity Truck ministry in 10 different locations citywide.

The most important thing is that every kid that receives a gift also gets an opportunity to hear the Gospel and receive eternal life by believing on the Lord Jesus Christ. Could you help us with supplying more gifts for kids by slipping in an extra love gift offering? With every gift God will bring another child to receive his love!



The Children's Activity Center – Children's Activity Truck, part of Walking Faith Ministry, is a non-profit faith based organization dedicated to sharing the love of Jesus Christ to children and their families in Houston's crime and poverty ridden inner-city. We use a number of colorful fourteen foot storage trucks converted into a portable stages to bring weekly presentations of the gospel in skits, dramas, puppetry, and video right to the very doorstep of the children who so most desperately need it. Weekly visitations to the homes of attending children help us to share the life changing message of Jesus with the entire family and help the ministry to identify current needs both spiritual and physical that can be met in a timely fashion.

Come visit! **YOU ARE WELCOME!**

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It's Tough

It's very hard, and a matter of fact, tough for a kid to grow up today in our culture. It is difficult for kids to find any joy, peace and maturity in a world that has become totally inverted to the truth, the character of God and any form of right living. It is truly an upside down world: a world that was revealed some three thousand years ago in the Bible by the Prophet Isaiah who said, "Look at those people! They say the good is bad and the bad is good. They think light is dark and dark is light. They think sour is sweet and sweet is sour. They think they are so smart." Isaiah 5:20.

Kids tend to look for role models at a very early age and when there is no father in the home, which is the case in a majority of these inner-city homes, they will look for the role model in just about any direction available. Let's face it folks, kids cannot grow up on their own. Children desperately need someone in their lives to lead them to the truth about God, themselves and others. Because of this need they are willing to accept just about anything to fill that void in their lives. Sadly, the majority of examples these kids have are perverted ones that have traded the truth for a lie.

For example, let's take drug dealing. Everyone should know that drugs destroy lives, crush futures and outright kill people. However, in an upside down culture in the inner-city, drug dealing is seen as a wonderful opportunity to make money and build a future. Imagine a boy about the age of ten; he sees his mom struggling with no money or food and then sees the drug dealers in nice cars with money and thinks and believes that this is the right way to go and becomes easy prey to become just that.

With no one there to encourage them to walk in the right direction, for many of these kids, the wrong thing becomes the right thing to do. Another area is premarital sex, topless dancing and prostitution. Young girls see their mothers having kids from boyfriends who come and go. They see them get welfare checks to support their kids. So they in turn view sex outside of marriage as something good to meet their needs. As soon as they can they get pregnant they start the same downward spiral of government assistance and ghetto living. Sometimes when they get older and need more income, then topless dancing and prostitution becomes the right thing to do. Again, with no one there to encourage them to walk in the right direction, the wrong thing becomes the right thing to do.

When one kid discovers the truth and begins to follow Jesus, then there is often the tremendous fire storm of peer pressure. They literally, for a season, become outcasts in a culture they suddenly don't fit into any longer. You see, the inner-city has a no-change policy. You must go along with the downward spiral to fit in. It is very scary and perceived as a threat for someone to really come to the knowledge of the truth because it brings unwanted conviction. It's hard for a kid once he sees the light to actually come to it in many cases. It's tough for a kid to break the mold and come forward. But praise to God that it can be done! Gilda Duncan our Administrative director and bus driver shared a recent testimony with me about an experience she had with a young boy that highlights this perfectly. The following is her testimony:

It happened when I was picking up children for CAC one Saturday on the bus. The children had all boarded the bus, and I noticed that one boy was standing in the doorway, not quite getting in. As I told him to come on the bus, I noticed that two boys were taunting him just outside the bus. "Don't go with that stupid church", they sneered "Come on go with us!" As I looked at these boys, I realized just what was going on. I looked at him and said, "Don't listen to them. That's just the devil, come and get on the bus. God has a blessing for you today." Reluctantly, he turned around and got on the bus. He was so tormented in his mind that he would not respond to anything that I said to him. He would not answer any questions and refused to sit down. I continued to try to talk to him to no avail. As we traveled to the Center, the bus helper prayed for him once more. I then went on to tell him that Jesus loved him and that he had something to tell him today. Our lesson for the week "if you want to serve Jesus, you will have to let go of some people out of your life." As I sat him down in his seat he was still very quiet. I checked on him throughout the meeting and after worship and prayer he was a new person. He was smiling and having fun and obedient throughout the meeting. It was wonderful to see the transformation. It was clear that this precious child was in conflict. The reality is that sometimes we do have to separate ourselves from things and people that hinder our spiritual growth. The good news is that what God gives us in return is always greater than what we sacrifice for him!

It's tough on these kids. They really don't have much of a chance to have a life worth living. For many it is a very uncertain future and there are no guarantees that they will even live to see a future. If they do live, often it will be a future that includes jail or death. When we go out into the neighborhoods, the streets and parking lots are full of children walking around in circles with literally nowhere to go and nothing to do. For many they are outside just to escape the violence that is inside their homes or they are out there simply because nobody really cares where they are. Folks, the streets have no mercy. Uncared for and unattended kids are targets for evil that they themselves are unaware of. And one thing is for certain none of these kids are going to magically show up in our churches anytime soon.

Let me ask you a question. What would happen to them if nobody with the light of God in them showed up in their lives? What if there was no one there to show them any better? Well, I think you know the answer. The answer is that nothing good would happen to them and they would receive nothing from God. Let's face it folks, we can complain about how bad the world is and how bad today's children have gotten. **But the reality is nothing is going to change until somebody that knows Jesus actually does something about it. These kids can't do any better because they don't know any better. We have to stop blaming them and do what we are supposed to do.** Why is the Children's Activity Truck so important? Because it puts somebody that really cares into their world with the Gospel that gives hope and with that hope a new life beyond what they are currently experiencing. Like Gilda and that boy at the bus door. Somebody had to be there for him. Will you help us do more? It can be done for at least one more kid.



Pastor Scott